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TYLER RESIDENT RECEIVES STATE CIVIL RIGHTS AWARD FROM NRCS

When it comes to being an exemplary public servant, Troy Mumphrey stands above the crowd.

Mumphrey, a Limited Resources Specialist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Tyler, Texas, was recently presented with the 2004 Texas NRCS Civil Rights Individual Award. This prestigious award is presented annually by the State Conservationist, to a group or individual associated with the NRCS that makes significant contributions in the area of Civil Rights program delivery.

Late nights and working weekends have contributed to Mumphrey's extraordinary community outreach efforts. While his position with the NRCS normally involves work with groups such as the Landowners Association of Texas, Texas /Mexico Borderlands Coalition and Small Farmers and Ranchers Community Based Organization, he has gone above and beyond the call of duty.

"Troy does a tremendous job in the outreach efforts for the agency," states Dr. Larry D. Butler, NRCS State Conservationist. "He educates people in the community not only about programs with the NRCS, but other USDA programs as well."

"He epitomizes what an NRCS employee should do to deliver programs to Texas communities," Butler continued.

Mumphrey, employed by the NRCS for the past 30 years, has worked with many groups, individuals and non-profit organizations to form beneficial liaisons in east Texas communities.

(more)

“As people gain confidence in you as a person and government employee,” states Mumphrey, “it is easier to work with landowners that would normally be hesitant to work with government agencies. When I can show them how I can help them, it gains their trust and changes their image of USDA personnel.”

Mumphrey has built a solid record of helping people. He developed two grant proposals on behalf of the Texas Small Farmers and Rancher Community Based Organization for a total of \$5,000. He also assisted the organization in developing a business plan and grant proposal for an additional \$15,000.

Mumphrey initiated a Saturday outreach tour for the East Texas Plant Materials Center in cooperation with the NRCS employees, Piney Woods Resource Conservation and Development Council, Landowners Association of Texas, Texas Small Farmers and Ranchers Community Based Organization and Texas Forest Service.

The Saturday tours served to educate people about plants and land management. As a result, Mumphrey used plant materials from the Plant Center as an economical and efficient method of reducing gully erosion on four minority landowner’s ranches. Two of the sites were so successful; they have been used as demonstration plots.

Mumphrey prepared NRCS grant proposals for a total of \$26,120 to develop contracts with five minority landowners, including two females. The money was used to help landowners make conscientious improvements to resources on their land.

Additionally, he has assisted several minority senior citizens, some with disabilities, to obtain a total of \$30,000 in grant funds from the Rural and Community Development branch of the USDA. The funds were used for home repairs and rural water connections.

“Personally, it’s been a rewarding and fulfilling experience to help people and make new friends,” says Mumphrey, a 30-year employee of the NRCS. “To improve the quality of life for people makes the time and effort well worth it.”